

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AGR-05 SAJ-01 SP-02 USIA-06 AID-05

EB-07 NSC-05 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-04 OMB-01

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 800

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMCONSUL MUNICH

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E.O. 11652: N/A

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SUBJECT: FOOD SUPPLIES KIEV-L'VOV

1. SUMMARY. EMBASSY OFFICERS VISITED KIEV 17-18 FEBRUARY AND L'VOV 19-21 FEBRUARY TO DETERMINE THE AVAILABILITY AND COST OF SELECTED FARM PRODUCE. STATE FOOD OUTLETS AND OPEN, COLLECTIVE MARKETS WERE VISITED IN BOTH CITIES, USUALLY DURING THE MORNING HOURS. MEAT, ESPECIALLY BEEF, WAS GENERALLY AVAILABLE IN BOTH CITIES, THOUGH KIEV HAD BOTH A LARGER SUPPLY AND GREATER SELECTION AT SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER PRICES. PORK LIKEWISE APPEARED TO BE READILY AVAILABLE. IN NEITHER CITY DID THE EMBASSY OFFICERS SEE MUTTON ON SALE. LIMITED SUPPLIES OF CHICKEN WERE FOUND IN BOTH CITIES BUT AT HIGH PRICES. THE EMBASSY OFFICERS, HOWEVER, OBSERVED PLENTIFUL SUPPLIES OF EGGS, CHEESE, KOLBASA, PORK FAT, AND BUTTER IN BOTH UKRAINIAN CENTERS. FINALLY, VEGETABLES AND FRUITS WERE PRESENT IN ABUNDANCE. ONLY FRESH TOMATOES DISTINGUISHED THEMSELVES BY THEIR ABSENCE FROM THE MARKETPLACE. MARKETS IN L'VOV OFFERED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES AT SOMEWHAT LOWER PRICES THAN FOUND IN KIEV.

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END SUMMARY.

2. FOOD SHOPPING IN KIEV. CHECKS OF TWO COLLECTIVE MARKETS AND SEVERAL OF THE STATE FOOD STORES DURING THE MORNING HOURS SUGGESTED THAT THE CITY'S RESIDENTS FARE NO WORSE WHEN THEY SIT DOWN TO EAT THAN DO THE INHABITANTS OF OTHER MAJOR SOVIET CITIES. INDEED, THE CONSUMER IN KIEV MAY BE SOMEWHAT BETTER OFF THAN HIS COUNTERPART IN MOSCOW OR VOGOGRADE. IN GENERAL, THE KIEVAN SHOPPER HAS A BETTER CHOICE OF FARM PRODUCE AND, AS A RULE, HE PAYS LESS FOR MEAT. THE LARGE COLLECTIVE MARKETS HAD LARGE STOCKS OF MEAT, ESPECIALLY BEEF. A KILO OF THE LATTER COST A RUBLE LESS IN THE MAIN MARKETS OF KIEV THAN IN SIMILAR OUTLETS IN VOLGOGRAD, WHICH ONE OF THE OFFICERS HAD RECENTLY VISITED. SOME VEAL WAS ALSO AVAILABLE, BUT AT HIGHER PRICES (2-70R/KILO). PORK DID NOT SEEM TO BE AS PLENTIFUL AS BEEF AND DEMAND FOR PORT APPEARED GREATER, INSPITE OF ITS HIGHER PRICE: TOP QUALITY BEEF SOLD IN THE OPEN MARKETS FOR 1-90R/KILO WHEREAS PORT SOLD FOR 2-70R/KILO. MUTTON COULD NOT BE FOUND, NOR WERE MANY CHICKENS ON SALE. EGGS, HOWEVER, WERE AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT THE CITY. SIMILARLY, THERE WERE ABUNDANT SUPPLIES OF KOLBASA AND PORK FATS IN BOTH THE STATE FOOD STORES AND THE COLLECTIVE MARKETS. FISH ALSO WAS AVAILABLE, AT PRICES FROM 0-50R TO 1-50R/KILO, DEPENDING ON THE TYPE AND QUALITY OF FISH. THE STATE FOOD STORES HAD A MORE LIMITED SELECTION OF MEAT. GENERALLY, KOLBASA WAS THE ONLY MEAT ITEM THAT COULD BE OBTAINED IN THEM, THOUGH IT SOLD FOR A GOOD DEAL LESS THERE THAN IN THE COLLECTIVE MARKETS. A FEW STATE OUTLETS, HOWEVER, DID SELL BEEF AND LARGE SIDES OF BEEF WERE OBSERVED HANGING IN REFRIGERATED COMPARTMENTS. WITH RESPECT TO OTHER ITEMS SUCH AS PORT FATS, BUTTER, MARGARINE, CHEESE, EGGS, AND FISH, THE STATE STORES APPEARED TO BE WELL SUPPLIED. BOTH THE STATE STORES AND THE COLLECTIVE MARKETS ALSO HAD ABUNDANT STOCKS OF CARROTS, POTATOES, BEETS, AND CABBAGE. THESE ITEMS COST LESS IN THE STATE STORES, HOWEVER, WHERE AS USUAL THE QUALITY WAS INFERIOR AND THE SELECTION NOT AS WIDE. OTHER VEGETABLES WERE LESS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PLENTIFUL IN KIEV. ONIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, COULD ONLY BE FOUND AT THE COLLECTIVE MARKETS, AND FRESH TOMATOES WERE NOWHERE TO BE SEEN, THOUGH LARGE NUMBERS OF PICKLED TOMATOES WERE ON THE MARKET. ONLY THE COLLECTIVE MARKETS SOLD ORANGES, TANGERINES, AND VERY WITHERED LOOKING PEARS, BUT APPLES COULD BE PURCHASED AT EITHER THE COLLECTIVE OR STATE STORES. FINALLY, THE EMBASSY OFFICERS NOTED THAT STORES AND

RESTAURANTS IN KIEV OFFERED A VARIETY OF GOOD, FRESH BLACK AND WHITE BREAD AT PRICES COMPARABLE TO THOSE OF MOSCOW.

3. FOOD SHOPPING IN L'VOV. VISITS TO A NUMBER OF STATE OUTLETS AND FARM MARKETS REVEALED THAT L'VOV HAD AS AMPLE A SUPPLY OF FOODSTUFFS AS KIEV AND MOSCOW AT THIS TIME OF YEAR. MEAT, ESPECIALLY BEEF, WAS PLENTIFUL AND OF GOOD QUALITY, THOUGH AT PRICES CONSIDERABLE HIGHER THAN FOUND IN KIEV. L'VOV'S OPEN MARKETS AND STATE FOOD STORES LIKEWISE OFFERED GOOD STOCKS OF FRESH VEGETABLE AND FRUITS. FINALLY, THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE THAT A SHORTAGE OF BREAD EXISTED.

EARLY MORNING VISITS BOTH TO THE TWO LARGE OPEN MARKETS AND TO STATE STORES INDICATED THAT LARGE QUANTITIES OF MEAT, AND MEAT PRODUCTS, WERE BEING SOLD IN L'VOV. MEAT, HOWEVER, WAS EXPENSIVE. FIRST QUALITY BEEF, FOR EXAMPLE, SOLD FOR THREE RUBLES A KILO AND DID NOT APPEAR TO BE IN DEMAND, JUDGING FROM THE ABSENCE OF LINES AT THE STALLS SELLING IT. PEOPLE, HOWEVER, DID QUEUE IN LARGE NUMBERS IN THE OPEN MARKETS FOR THE SECOND AND THIRD QUALITY BEEF, WHICH SOLD AT 2-80R/KILO AND 2-60R/KILO, RESPECTIVELY. THE LONGEST LINES THAT EMBASSY OFFICERS OBSERVED, HOWEVER, WERE FOR BONES (0-38R/KILO), PIG'S HEADS (0-60R/KILO), AND PIG'S FEET (1-00R/KILO). PORT ALSO WAS PLENTIFUL IN L'VOV, THOUGH LESS SO THAN BEEF. THE PRICE OF PORT LIKEWISE WAS HIGH, A KILO OF THE BEST QUALITY PORK SELLING FOR THREE RUBLES. LINES FOR PORT WERE GENERALLY LONGER THAN THOSE FOR BEEF. PORK PRODUCTS WERE READILY AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT THE CITY THOUGH ALSO AT HIGH PRICES. PORK FAT, FOR EXAMPLE, COST 3-10R/KILO IN THE OPEN MARKETS AND 20 KOPECKS LESS IN THE STATE STORES; KOLBASA COST OVER TWICE AS MUCH IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE COLLECTIVE MARKETS (5-00R/KILO) THAN IN THE STATE OUTLETS (2-10R/KILO). VERY FEW STATE STORES OFFERED FRESH MEAT; A FEW SOLD PACKED BEEF (FASOVAN) AT 1-95R/KIL- AND SOME HAD TONGUE AT 1-70R/KILO. THEY ALSO GENERALLY OFFERED A MEATLOAF-LIKE PRODUCT (KHBETS' OKREMII) FOR 2-10R/KILO.

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NOT EVERY TYPE OF MEAT, HOWEVER, WAS AVAILABLE. MUTTON, FOR EXAMPLE, COULD NOT BE FOUND IN L'VOV, EITHER IN MARKETS OR IN THE RESTAURANTS. CHICKEN ALSO SEEMED TO BE SHORT SUPPLY; EMBASSY OFFICERS SAW NO CHICKENS FOR SALE IN THE COLLECTIVE MARKETS UNTIL SATURDAY MORNING WHEN THEY SUDDENLY APPEARED IN FAIRLY LARGE NUMBERS. THEIR PRICE, HOWEVER, WAS HIGH; THREE RUBLES PER KILO. SIMILARLY, WAITERS GENERALLY CLAIMED THAT THE CHICKEN DISHES WERE ALREADY "SOLD OUT" THOUGH MOST RESTAURANTS OFFERED CHICKEN DISHES ON THEIR MENUS. THERE WAS, HOWEVER, NO SHORTAGE OF EGGS, WHICH COULD BE OBTAINED IN THE LARGE MARKETS, IN STATE FOOD STORES, AND IN MANY SMALL KIOSKS THROUGHOUT L'VOV. THEY SOLD AT TEN FOR 1-50R.

THE OPEN MARKETS IN L'VOV HAD LARGE QUANTITIES OF GOOD QUALITY FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES AS WELL AS NUTS AND SEEDS. CABBAGE, BEETS, ONIONS, CARROTS, AND MUSHROOMS APPEARED IN LARGE QUANTITIES IN THE COLLECTIVE MARKETS THOUGH EMBASSY OFFICERS DID NOT SEE ANY CABBAGE OR ONIONS ON SALE IN THE STATE STORES. THE LATTER OFFERED BEETS AT EIGHT KOPECKS/KILO AND CARROTS AT 15 KOPECKS/KILO. BOTH STATE AND OPEN MARKETS HAD LARGE STOCKS OF SMALL

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BUT GOOD-LOOKING POTATOES; THEY WERE PRICED AT 1-60R/KILO IN THE OPEN MARKETS AND 1-09R/KILO IN STATE OUTLETS. THE OPEN MARKETS HAD MORE AND BETTER QUALITY FRUIT

THAN THESE OFFICERS HAD SEEN THIS WINTER IN EUROPEAN
RUSSIA OUTSIDE OF MOSCOW (VOLGOGRAD, KIEV). VENDORS,
PROBABLY CAUCASIANS, HAWKED LARGE FRESH LEMONS, TANGERINES,
ORANGES, AND EVEN POMEGRANATES IN THE OPEN MARKETS,
THOUGH AT STEEP PRICES, AT LEAST FIVE RUBLES A KILO.
FEW PEARS WERE SEEN BUT THE STATE AND OPEN MARKETS OFFERED
LARGE QUANTITIES OF APPLES, GENERALLY SMALL AND OF
SALLOW APPEARANCE. THEY SOLD AT 1-50R/KILO.
LIKE KIEV, L'VOV DOES NOT SUFFER FROM A SHORTAGE OF
BREAD. BREAD STORES THROUGHOUT THE CITY WERE PLENTIFULLY
STOCKED WITH GOOD FRESH BLACK AND WHITE BREAD. THOUGH
THE STORES WERE OFTEN CROWDED, THEY APPEARED TO MEET
DEMAND EASILY. PRICES RANGED GENERALLY FROM 26 KOPECKS
FOR A LOAF OF GOOD WHITE BREAD TO 18 KOPECKS FOR A
PORTION OF FIRST QUALITY BLACK BREAD. IN ADDITION,
THE STATE SHOPS OFFERED LARGE QUANTITIES OF OTHER BAKERY
PRODUCTS, INCLUDING SOME VERY TASTY PASTRY, WHICH THE
CITY PRIDES ITSELF ON. L'VOV'S RESTAURANTS AND CAFES
OFFERED ALSO GOOD QUALITY WHITE AND DARK BREAD THROUGHOUT
THE DAY.
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